

EXPRESSWAY VOTE DELAYED BY CITY

Final Decision Is Postponed After 6-Hour Hearing

By RICHARD P. HUNT

The Board of Estimate postponed final action on the proposed \$100,000,000 Lower Manhattan Expressway last night after a sometimes-stormy six-hour public hearing.

Following a 20-minute closed meeting of the board, Mayor Wagner announced that the members "will vote no later than the middle of next week" on the controversial project. The members of the board vote in public.

The Mayor said that no further public hearings would be held and that no further testimony would be heard.

He explained the delay on a decision by saying that some new ideas had been presented during yesterday's hearing and that the board wanted to set aside at least three hours to discuss the project before voting.

Mr. Wagner, who was absent during the first four hours of the hearing, said he himself would like "to get filled in" on the arguments presented during the day.

Proposed in 1941

The highway project, which was first proposed in 1941, would link the Holland Tunnel and the West Side Highway with the Manhattan and Williamsburg Bridges on the East Side. Most of the 10-lane roadway would be elevated, but the branch to the Williamsburg Bridge would be below street level.

The Federal Government would pay \$90,000,000 of the cost, and the state \$10,000,000. The city's cost is estimated at \$220,000. The project would require the relocation of 1,972 families living along the route, and 804 business establishments would have to be moved.

Forty-four witnesses opposed the project yesterday on the ground that it would uproot families, would destroy community life and noted landmarks and would fall short of solving traffic problems.

Five witnesses argued that the project would save time and money, would prevent traffic from strangling the city's economy and would eliminate several old buildings considered to be fire hazards.

Three of the four Manhattan Congressmen, Leonard Farbstein and William Fitts Ryan, Democrats, and John V. Lindsay, Republican, spoke in opposition.

The plan was also opposed by Assemblymen William F. Passannante and Louis DeSalvio, Democrats; Councilman Theodore S. Weiss, Democrat; Councilman Theodore R. Kupferman,

Republican, and State Senator Joseph R. Marro, Democrat.

Mr. DeSalvio caused a stir early in the hearing by saying that "only one old man," whom he described as "stubborn and cantankerous," was in favor of the expressway. He did not mention any name.

Mr. Lindsay, however, interpreted this as an attack on Robert Moses, who, as the Mayor's representative for Federal-state arterial highway systems, is a principal sponsor of the expressway plan.

"I do not see that it serves any useful purpose to describe him as a stubborn old man," Mr. Lindsay said. He also told the board that there were ambiguities in the Federal law covering grants to such projects and that he proposed to introduce a bill to clarify procedures.

Mrs. Jane Jacobs, chairman of the Stop the Lower Manhattan Expressway Committee, called the proposed highway a "monstrous and useless folly." She dismissed arguments for the plan as "piffle."

William Zucker, vice president of the Downtown Lower Manhattan Association, said that "the people who reap the benefits of such a project are numbered in the millions." Charles J. Murphy, speaking for the Automobile Club of New York, described the project as "essential."

Other supporters of the plan included Milton Abelson, an economist for the Regional Plan Association, and Arthur Hodgkiss, assistant general manager of the Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority, who said he spoke for Mr. Moses personally and not in behalf of the authority.